

Embassy Warden Notice

January 8, 2010

Three confirmed incidents involving attempted arson against Christian places of worship took place last night (January 7th) in Kuala Lumpur. American citizens are advised to use extra caution when moving about the city or going to places of worship.

Though the attacks did not result in any injuries or fatalities, it is prudent to take extra caution and be vigilant of surroundings and large groups of people. Today, January 8th, several public demonstrations were scheduled to take place in the Kuala Lumpur area. Given this the coming weekend should be one of caution and increased awareness.

At this time we are not aware of any further demonstrations being planned. The Malaysian government at the highest levels has been quick to condemn last night's incidents and pledged to take whatever measures necessary to prevent a recurrence. The Home Minister has announced that the police have been deployed in force to monitor the situation and that demonstrations are being discouraged. Political parties have been uniform in condemning the incidents and the idea of attacking or targeting houses of worship. There has been no indication that foreigners were being singled out in the attempted arson of last night. The incidents would appear to be isolated and connected to ongoing disputes over the use of the word 'Allah' in contexts that some people or groups find offensive.

Even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can escalate into violence. American citizens are therefore urged to avoid the areas of demonstrations if possible, and to exercise caution if unavoidably caught within the vicinity of any large groups of people.

Americans living or traveling in Malaysia are encouraged to register with the U.S. Embassy through the State Department's travel registration website, <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>. Registration allows us to contact you in an emergency and provide updated information on travel and security. Americans without Internet access may register directly with the Embassy. The U.S. Embassy is located at 376 Jalan Tun Razak, 50400 Kuala Lumpur and can be contacted at:

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Fax: 03-2148-5801

Website: <http://malaysia.usembassy.gov>

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